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S. Deger-Jalkotzy

A Very Underestimated Period. The Submycenaean Phase of Early Greek Culture

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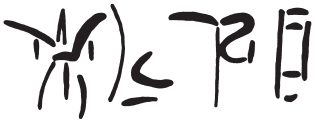
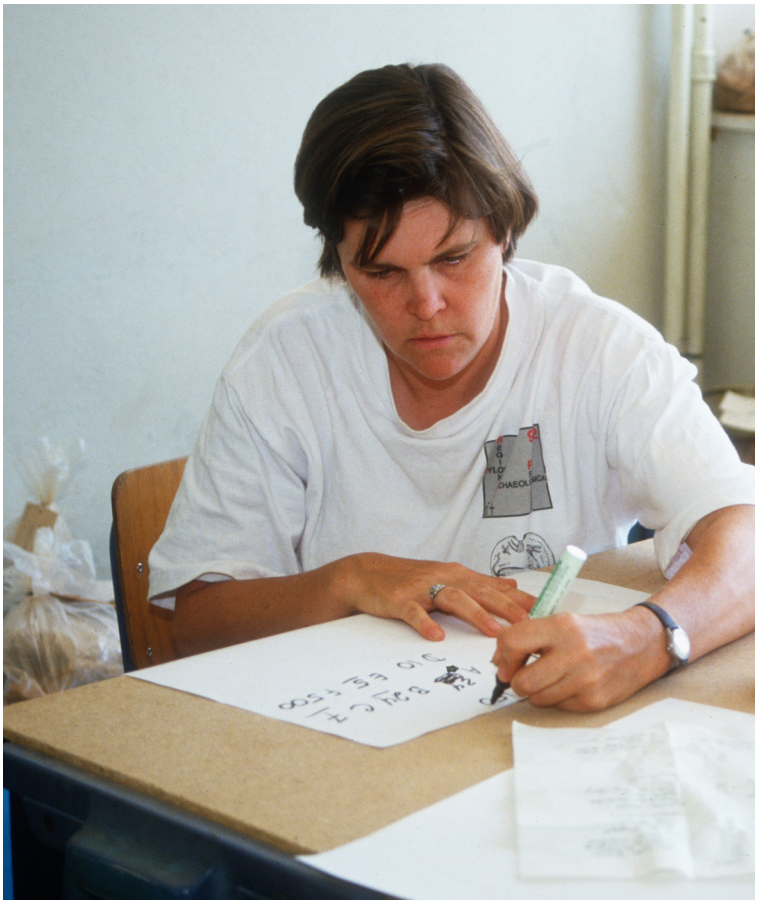


KE-RA-ME-JA

Studies Presented to Cynthia W. Shelmerdine



Cynthia in the Hora School House. Courtesy Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati and the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project.

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Studies Presented to Cynthia W. Shelmerdine

edited by

Dimitri Nakassis, Joann Gulizio, and Sarah A. James

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CHAPTER

4

A Very Underestimated Period: The Submycenaean Phase of Early Greek Culture

Sigrid Deger-Jalkotzy

Overview of Submycenaean Archaeological Finds

Within the investigation of the early history of Greece,* the so-called Submycenaean period has received minimal attention. Scholars in the field of Aegean prehistory tend to view the transitional phase between Late Helladic (LH) IIIC and the beginning of the Protogeometric (PG) period either as an unimportant appendage to the Mycenaean culture or as an unimportant prelude to the Early Iron Age. Only a few authors, such as Styrenius (1967), have paid attention to the Submycenaean period in its own right, some of them drawn by the chance (or necessity) to study and publish the finds from sites where Submycenaean material was excavated (most recently, see Eder 2001, 2006; Ruppenstein 2007). Moreover, there has been considerable disagreement on the question of whether or not there actually existed a separate cultural phase that could be called "Submycenaean." Scholars such as Desborough, Rutter, and Podzuweit—using varying lines of approach—claimed that the cist grave cemeteries of the Arsenal in Salamis and the Kerameikos in Athens were contemporaneous with the Mycenaean chamber tomb cemeteries of LH IIIC Late. Desborough explained the differences between "Mycenaean" and "Submycenaean" features in terms of two cultures that existed synchronously but were developed by separate ethnic groups

*To Cynthia, with great admiration. Although her main interest lies with the Mycenaean palaces, she has always paid attention to the aftermath, too.

Since the completion of this manuscript, Papadopoulos, Damiata, and Marston (2011) published an article pertaining to the present subject.

(Desborough 1964, 17–20; 1972, 64–111). Other authors hold the view that the "Submycenaean" features of settlements and cemeteries represented, in fact, the final stage of LH IIIC Late (Rutter 1978; Podzuweit 1988, 215–216; 2007; Sipsie-Eschbach 1991, 187). Against these views, it has been argued that the Arsenal and Kerameikos cemeteries were chronologically subsequent to the tombs of LH IIIC Late (e.g., Schachermeyr 1980, 183–199; Mountjoy 1988; Ruppenstein 2003; 2007; 2009) and that at some settlements a "Submycenaean" phase, indeed, could be distinguished from the layers of LH IIIC Late (e.g., Kilian 1988; Papadimitriou 1988).

I found myself compelled to deal with the "Submycenaean problem" on occasion of the Greek-Austrian excavations at Elateia in central Greece, conducted by Phanouria Dakoronia and myself. Meanwhile it became generally known that the chamber tombs of the Mycenaean cemetery on the Elateia-Alonaki slope north of the modern village were used far beyond the end of the Mycenaean period. The first tombs were cut in early LH IIIA, and the last ones were abandoned around 800 B.C. (for a short survey, see Dakoronia 2004; Deger-Jalkotzy 2004).

Moreover, it turned out that the long-standing use of the Elateia-Alonaki cemetery was not without parallels in the Upper Kephissos valley. Similar cemeteries were excavated at other sites, such as Amphikleia and Modi. Unfortunately, very little information is available on these sites (for Amphikleia, see Schachermeyr 1980, 319–321), but Dakoronia has kindly informed me that the cemeteries were abandoned in the course of the 10th century B.C.

Another case of continuity between the Mycenaean period and the Early Iron Age that has been known and published for some time is the sanctuary of Kalapodi. It is situated near the modern village on a pass of the main route between the Kephissos valley and the coastal areas of East Locris. A small shrine was built in its vicinity in LH IIIC Early (and in fact even before that date; see Niemeier 2008, 2009). It was destroyed in LH IIIC Late, but cult activities continued until the site was built over again by consecutive cult buildings (for Late Geometric and Archaic temples, see Felsch 2001; Felsch, ed., 2007; Niemeier 2008, 2009). The cult activities from LH IIIC until the end of the Early Protogeometric (EPG) period left 23 strata (Jacob-Felsch 1996, 91–102). Of these layers, 11–15 were attributed to the transition from LH IIIC Late to EPG, and three of them (13–15, "Horizon 7") were expressly labeled as Submycenaean (Jacob-Felsch 1996, xvi). Analysis of the animal bones has provided an idea of the character of the deity who was worshipped in the Kalapodi sanctuary (Felsch 2001, with bibliography). Apart from the traditional Mycenaean sacrificial animals, such as sheep, goat, cattle, and pig, the paleozoological material from Kalapodi included a remarkable percentage of wild animals, such as bear, lion, red deer, wild pig, and turtle. Therefore, it may be imagined that among the worshippers who gathered at the Kalapodi sanctuary there may well have been inhabitants of the surrounding mountains who made their living as shepherds and hunters.

In recent years, two further instances from central Greece of a continuous tradition from LH IIIC to the Early Iron Age have been reported, both of them situated at the bay of Atalanti in East Locris. At the northern end of the bay the settlement of Livanates-Kynos was excavated. The site yielded substantial evidence of a gradual transition from LH IIIC Late to EPG (Dakoronia 2003, with bibliography; Dakoronia and Kounouklas 2009). Near the end of the same bay is the small island of Mitrou, where recent excavations have brought to light an extensive Early Mycenaean settlement, as well as settlement and burial evidence for the transitional period from Late Mycenaean to Early Protogeometric (Van de Moortel 2009). A LH IIIC Late/Submycenaean phase may be represented by a (ceremonial? cultic?) deposit in Building C. It consisted of 22 miniature handmade unburnished vases and a wheelmade cooking pot covered with a krater base for a lid. This vessel contained the thigh bones of a young pig and four fetal piglets (Van de Moortel 2009, 362–364, figs. 5, 6). Most of the miniature vases are imitations of Mycenaean open shapes. However, one mug certainly was formed after a handmade model (Lis 2009, pl. 8:3). Therefore, Lis may well be right in synchronizing this "non-profane" deposit with the LH IIIC Late/Submycenaean layers 11–15 from Kalapodi (Lis 2009, table 4).

Returning now to the Elateia-Alonaki cemetery, the funerary assemblages suggest that from LH IIIC Middle/Advanced onward prosperity settled in and remained until the EPG period. Obviously, the inhabitants took advantage of the favorable

economic conditions of the area and its excellent situation at the major routes of communication (Deger-Jalkotzy 2007). In terms of burial gifts, the community's continuous prosperity during the transitional period was demonstrated above all by more than 1,500 bronze objects (Dakoronia 2004).

The funerary assemblages assignable to the span of time between LH IIIC Late and EPG seem to represent three stages of development, of which two at least should be assigned to the Submycenaean period (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009). The first post–LH IIIC stage may be called "LH IIIC Final" or "Final Mycenaean," although I prefer the term "LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean" (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 78–84, figs. 1–3). The second phase can be assigned with confidence to the Submycenaean period (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 85–97, figs. 4–6, 8), while the third phase can be viewed as representing the transition to, or even the beginning of EPG (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 97, fig. 7). During the first (LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean) phase, the pottery remained Mycenaean in appearance, but the decorative system lacked inspiration. The technical quality of the ceramics, too, deteriorated due to the poor preparation of the clay and inadequate firing. The vases assumed a baggy appearance, and their height hardly ever exceeded 0.15 m. The repertoire of shapes was reduced to amphoriskoi, small jugs, stirrup jars (Furumark Shape [FS] 177; see Furumark 1941), and lekythoi (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, figs. 1, 2:1–4, 9:1–3). The pottery of the second (mature Submycenaean) phase, too, was marked by its Mycenaean heritage, but a new spirit expressed itself in the way vases were shaped and structured. The technical quality also improved. These achievements not only foreshadowed the further development of the regional pottery production, but eventually led to the ability of making the large-sized amphorae and oinochoai of the PG period. However, raised straight or slightly conical feet were almost absent or at least extremely rare (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 94–96). Stirrup jars had disappeared from the repertoire. In contrast, lekythoi and amphoriskoi were the most popular shapes (Fig. 4.1).

Amphoriskoi with vertical handles on the shoulder (Fig. 4.1:f, g) deserve particular attention because they may have been a central Greek invention (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 95–96, figs. 10–12, 14). The shape may have started in LH IIIC Late, and it remained popular until the EPG period. Light ground decoration consisted of bands and patterns such as the scroll (cf. Fig. 4.1:f), tassel, and wavy line (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, fig. 12), but monochrome pieces prevailed by far (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, figs. 10–11, 14:4–8).

During the second Submycenaean phase, handmade vases made their first appearance (Fig. 4.2:d–h; Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, fig. 15) and thereafter served as burial gifts until the end of the ninth century B.C., when the cemetery was abandoned (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 91–93). At Livanates-Kynos in East Locris, too, handmade burnished vases did not occur in layers of LH IIIC Middle and Late; they first appeared together with Submycenaean vases and remained in use during the Early Iron Age (Dakoronia 2003, 47). In contrast, the pottery deposits at the sanctuary of Kalapodi already included handmade pottery from LH IIIC Early onward (Jacob-Felsch 1996, 75–78). In this case, the dedication of handmade vessels may have been related to the character of the deity who was worshipped at Kalapodi, as well as to the cult practices of the worshippers who congregated at this rural sanctuary. In any case, during the Early Iron Age, handmade pottery played a more pronounced role in central Greece than in Attica, in the Peloponnese, and in the islands. It may be further suggested that the origin of the (few) handmade jugs and jars found in the Submycenaean graves of the Kerameikos may be sought, indeed, in central Greece, as has been recently discussed by Ruppenstein (2007, 169–183).

At Elateia the repertoire of handmade vases was more or less confined to the one-handled jug and the two-handled jar (or amphora), mostly of the rim-handled or neck-handled type (Fig. 4.2:g, h). A few handmade belly-handled amphoriskoi obviously imitated wheelmade specimens (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 92). A small group of four handmade vases displays incised horizontal lines and two parallel zigzags enhanced by white incrustation (Fig. 4.2:d–f). In view of this small number, it seems unlikely that incised handmade vases were typical of the repertoire of ancient Phocis. Ruppenstein may well be right that a wider horizon of northern Greece and the Balkans in general should be considered with regard to the origin of this pottery class (Ruppenstein 2007, 178–180).

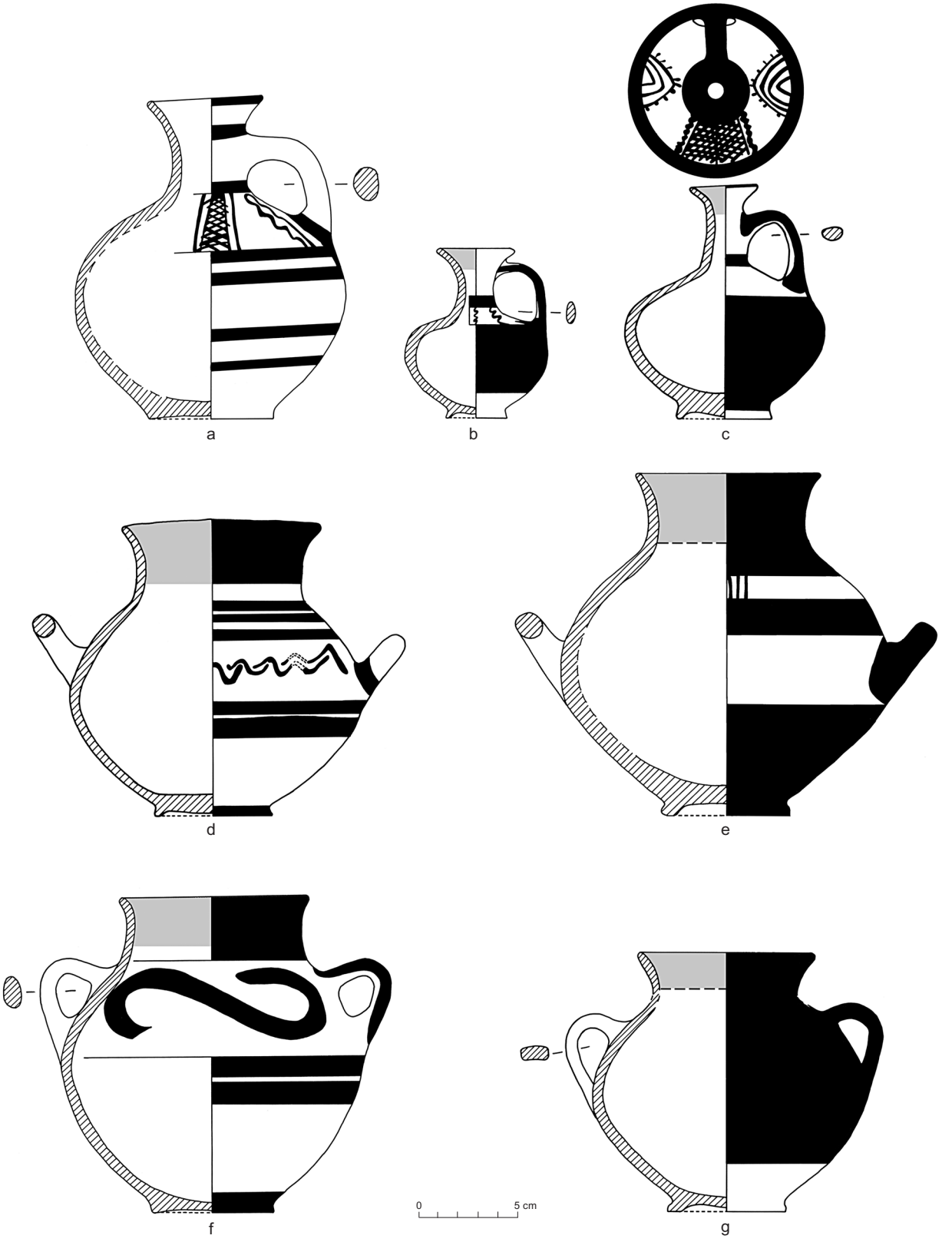

Figure 4.1. Submycenaean wheelmade vases from Elateia: (a–c) lekythoi from tombs 35, 36, and 4; (d, e) belly-handled amphoriskoi from tombs 62 and 49; (f, g) amphoriskoi with vertical handles on the shoulder from tombs 50 and 24. Artwork B. Eder, M. Frauenglas, and E. Held. Gray indicates dark paint on interior of vessel.

Figure 4.2. Novel features of Submycenaean character from Elateia: (a) long dress pins with swellings from various tombs; (b) pair of dress pins with globular heads from tomb 24; (c) arched fibulae with twisted bow from tombs 24 and 4; (d–f) handmade juglet, pyxis, and amphoriskos with incised and encrusted decoration from tombs 24, 70, and 45; (g, h) handmade jars from tombs 24 and 49. Photos St. Alexandrou, B. Eder, and E. Held; layout M. Frauenglas.

During both phases of the Submycenaean period at Elateia, the deposit of metal objects reached a pinnacle. Individual skeletons had rings on every finger of both hands, and the numbers of dress fasteners and other forms of personal adornment exceeded anything previously observed at the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. The metal finds will be published by Dakoronia (for a first survey, see Dakoronia 2004). Therefore, the present text will refer only to the first appearances of novel metal objects and refrain from entering into technical details.

During the first (LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean) phase, long dress pins with oblong swellings on the upper part and nail heads or other terminals on top of the shaft (Fig. 4.2:a) made their first appearance, occurring singly rather than in pairs. Some were additionally decorated with incisions and/or ring-like moldings. Most of them reached a considerable length of 30 cm or more. Violin bow–shaped fibulae with twisted bows or with leaf-shaped bows decorated with patterns in dot *repoussé* were still in use and indeed may have still been made during this phase. However, these objects had had their heyday during LH IIIC Late. The largest group of metal objects consisted of finger rings, which were found in great numbers. The rings consisted of hammered bands with open or overlapping terminals with flat or plano-convex sections. A few rings had a midrib, too. Other types consisted of cast rings of modest width and with plano-convex sections, spiral rings, and shield rings decorated with dot *repoussé*. Some of these types may have already appeared in LH IIIC Late, but it was during the first Submycenaean phase that they were all fully established and richly represented among the burial gifts (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 82–84). Novelties of the second Submycenaean phase at Elateia consisted of dress pins with a globular head (Fig. 4.2:b), arched fibulae with a twisted bow (Fig. 4.2:c), and massive cast finger rings with a midrib and triangular section. Dress pins were now deposited in pairs, as were other types, too, such as pins with a rolled top or pins with swellings on the upper end of the shaft. Apart from these novel elements, bronze adornments that had been introduced previously continued to be in use for burial gifts (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 96). Finds of iron were extremely rare. During the third (Submycenaean/EPG) phase, long iron dress pins with a globular head of bronze appeared for the first time.

Three new burial customs were practiced at Elateia-Alonaki in or after the end of LH IIIC Late (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009). First, corpses were deposited one above another in extremely contracted positions. This was in contrast to prior tradition, according to which the deceased were deposited outstretched with slightly contracted legs. The new practice was mainly performed during the first (LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean) phase and may have been discontinued before the end of the Submycenaean period (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 97). Second, new tombs of very small size and of an "acanonical" shape were dug. Despite their small size, these tombs were used for multiple burials and thus still adhered to the Mycenaean tradition (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 78, fig. 1). Third, cremation was introduced at Elateia in LH IIIC Late and continued to be performed for Submycenaean and PG burials. Although the number of cremations at Elateia was marginal (less than 2% of the burials), it is nevertheless worth mentioning that this burial practice reached a peak during the LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean span of time (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 84).

The question arises as to why it was just in the final phase of LH IIIC Late and the Early Submycenaean that a change in burial practices took place. Elsewhere we have connected this phenomenon with the fact that during that period the numbers of burials in the Elateia-Alonaki cemetery reached a maximum (Dakoronia, Deger-Jalkotzy, and Fabrizii-Reuer 2000–2001). Even pits in the chamber floors were used for primary burials. Moreover, vases of LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean were deposited both on the floor and in the pits of the chambers. Therefore, the conclusion suggests itself that at the end of LH IIIC and in the first phase of the Submycenaean period a growth of population took place at Elateia.

Summing up, the evidence from cemeteries and a sanctuary in the region of ancient Phocis and from two settlements of East Locris suggests that in central Greece the end of the Mycenaean Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age took a different course from that seen in Attica or the Peloponnese. In those regions and on many islands, the end of LH IIIC appears to have been marked by decline and abandonment, after which a new beginning was inaugurated under different cultural

conditions. However, even this view may have to be revised in view of recent archaeological data. Two particular cases will be examined below.

In the region of Achaea, the cultural and historical development at the end of the Mycenaean civilization appears to have partly resembled that of the Upper Kephissos valley. It was suggested long ago that the Mycenaean chamber tombs of Achaea were still in use when in the eastern regions of the Peloponnese LH IIIC had already given way to Submycenaean or even PG (e.g., Papadopoulos 1978–1979, 184–185). This opinion met with some skepticism because it was not supported by strong material evidence (Eder 2009, 135). It has now been corroborated, however, by the finds from recent excavations of chamber tomb cemeteries such as Portes and Voudeni in western Achaea, analyzed by Moschos (2009). According to this author, the prosperous period of LH IIIC Late was followed by a short phase labeled "Phase 6a: Final Mycenaean." The pottery style may be characterized as a "declining phase of LH IIIC Late," which at the same time displayed Submycenaean features (Moschos 2009, 256–259, figs. 11–30). During this phase, the communities of western Achaea remained prosperous and continued to entertain a wide network of external connections, which even extended as far as the east coast of southern Italy and Cyprus. The pottery finds allow for synchronizations with Elis, Arcadia, Aetolia, the Ionian islands, and central Greece (Elateia!), as well as with the Submycenaean graves in Attica and in the east Peloponnese (Moschos 2009, 260–261). The subsequent "Phase 6b" according to Moschos was clearly Submycenaean. This phase was of longer duration than the previous one. The local pottery style was a blend of Submycenaean and late Mycenaean features (Moschos 2009, 259–260, figs. 31–40). Arched and twisted fibulae, however, as well as long dress pins in pairs, appeared along with Mycenaean weapons (Moschos 2009, 241, nos. 38, 39). Together, the two phases 6a ("Final Mycenaean") and 6b ("Submycenaean") constituted the Submycenaean period in Achaea. During the earlier Phase 6a, the Mycenaean chamber tombs continued to be used and burial customs did not change. In contrast, during Phase 6b many cemeteries were abandoned (except for the Patras region with the settlement at Hagia Kyriaki and the cemetery at Voudeni), and external contacts became restricted to the neighboring regions. Settlement evidence from Achaea is notoriously poor. However, Moschos argues that Teichos Dymaion, Chalandritsa-Stavros, and Pagona survived in Phase 6a and were abandoned thereafter, while Hagia Kyriaki (the settlement connected with the Voudeni cemetery, see above) was still inhabited in Phase 6b (Moschos 2009, 242–243). This would agree with my own impression that the LH IIIC settlement at Aigeira in eastern Achaea survived into the Submycenaean period and even later (Deger-Jalkotzy 1991, 27). Toward the end of Phase 6b, which was probably overlapping with the beginning of EPG elsewhere, several Mycenaean chamber tombs in the Patras area and tholos tombs (Kallithea) in western Achaea were reused. The burial gifts now included iron knives and swords and handmade pottery. The reuse of Mycenaean tombs in Achaea is quite in contrast to the neighboring regions of Elis and Aetolia, where cist graves and pithos burials prevailed. It has been explained by Moschos in terms of social and demographic changes (Moschos 2009, 245, 250–254). We shall return to this point later on.

From the island of Euboea, new excavations on the Xeropolis hill at Lefkandi will lead to a revision of the picture that has until recently prevailed on the transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age. In the first place, the settlement on Xeropolis did not come to an end with LH IIIC Late. Domestic structures (cf. Lemos 2008, 39), buildings of larger dimensions and higher quality (dwellings probably reserved for members of a local elite; on the Early Iron Age "megaron" and its LH IIIC predecessor, see Lemos 2008; 2009a; 2009b, 182), and special structures of possibly nonprivate functions (Lemos 2009a, 54) built during the transition from LH IIIC Late to EPG testify to a continuous settlement. At the same time, well-known new single grave cemeteries were established in its vicinity, and the Mycenaean tradition of burial customs came to a close (Popham, Sackett, and Themelis, eds., 1980).

There is no doubt that the new archaeological evidence requires a fresh approach to the transitional period from LH IIIC to the Early Iron Age in its own right. Clearly, the vision of a uniform "Submycenaean culture" has to be abandoned. The post–LH IIIC developments expressed themselves in greatly varying fashions throughout the regions of Greece. The instances of central Greece and Achaea suggest that in some regions, indeed,

the Mycenaean tombs continued to be used. However, it is not tenable that LH IIIC Late and Submycenaean settlements and cemeteries were entirely synchronous. Even if some regional pottery styles still adhered to the Mycenaean tradition, it can be shown that they were influenced by those ceramic characteristics that we have come to label as "Submycenaean" (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009; Moschos 2009). Moreover, the burial gifts included metal objects of so-called Submycenaean types. Nevertheless, the crucial question still remains as to when and where those cultural features commonly associated with the term "Submycenaean" were first developed and adopted.

From the numerous topics pertaining to the transitional period from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age, I would like to select two major problems.

Phasing, Chronology, and Synchronisms

With regard to chronology, we have no more than two key dates for the postpalatial Mycenaean era: ca. 1200 B.C. for the beginning of LH IIIC and ca. 1050/40 B.C. for the beginning of the PG. The span of time enclosed by these dates, ca. 150 years, must have comprised the entire LH IIIC and the Submycenaean periods (Weninger and Jung 2009, fig. 14). I have tentatively assigned the Submycenaean span of time in central Greece to ca. 1080–1040 B.C. (see also further below).

A great problem is posed by the chronology of the Submycenaean burials of the Kerameikos cemetery. Pottery collected from ca. 140 graves was subdivided into four stylistic and chronological groups. Groups I–III can definitely be called Submycenaean, while group IV represents a transitional stage between the Submycenaean and EPG. The duration of time attributed by Ruppenstein to these four groups was "not significantly less than 100 years" (Ruppenstein 2007, 269). In contrast, Moschos has subdivided the post–LH IIIC period of Achaea into a short Phase 6a and a longer Phase 6b. Only vases of the first phase are said to display parallels with the pottery from the Kerameikos (Moschos 2009, 261).

As for Elateia, the considerable increase in burials during the two Submycenaean phases may or may not have taken place over a long span of time. It is possible that the increase in burial numbers, combined with the change in burial habits and the use of cremation, may be ascribed to demographic developments rather than to an extended span of time (see further below). The stylistic development of the wheelmade pottery was slow and adhered to the Mycenaean tradition, so that any calculation on the basis of the pottery development has to remain speculative. The first (LH IIIC Final/Early Submycenaean) phase can be synchronized with Phase 6a in Achaea (Moschos 2009, 239). However, it appears to have been of a longer duration than the incipient Submycenaean phase in the northwest Peloponnese. During the mature Submycenaean phase of Elateia, the contacts with Achaea had come to a close. Instead, a useful hint may be gained from the lekythoi (Fig. 4.1:a, b) because in Athens and Attica vertical wavy lines were more or less confined to the lekythoi of the second phase of the Submycenaean period. The handmade pottery establishes a further chronological link between the mature Submycenaean phase at Elateia and the mature Submycenaean phase(s) of the Kerameikos. On the whole, it seems reasonable to allocate two generations for the two Submycenaean phases at Elateia (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, esp. 98–99).

In contrast to Ruppenstein, Lemos has viewed Submycenaean as a short "intermediate stage between the Late Mycenaean period and the following PG period" (Lemos 2002, 7–8). This view certainly applies to the evidence from the Skoubris cemetery and from the new excavations on the Xeropolis hill, which do not warrant the idea of a long duration of time.

Time calculations with regard to the sanctuary at Kalapodi are rendered difficult by the paucity of material from levels 13–15 (Jacob-Felsch 1996, 98–99). Moreover, the pottery style hardly differs from that found in the levels of LH IIIC Late. It is significant, however, that during the Submycenaean period the percentage of handmade pottery rose to 50% and more. This fact brings to mind the fact that the first appearance of handmade pots in the

Elateia-Alonaki tombs occurred during the second (mature) Submycenaean phase.

Under these circumstances, the problem of the relative chronology of the Submycenaean period and where it should be placed within the framework of absolute chronology between 1200 and 1040 B.C. remains to be discussed anew. First, research into the chronology of the period must take painstaking regard of regional diversities and seek out synchronistic elements. Moreover, it has to be asked whether or not there was a correlation between the number of burials and the duration of time. Is it conceivable that in certain regions, such as Attica, the stylistic development was more dynamic than in others? In other words, is it feasible that the Submycenaean phases I–III of the Kerameikos covered, in fact, no more time than the two Submycenaean phases of Elateia and Achaea?

Possible Demographic and Political Changes

It is only natural that the obvious cultural changes during the transitional period have often been explained in terms of demographic causes. In particular, dissolution of political organization, cultural decline, and depopulation were taken into consideration. Even so, explanatory models based on migrations have received much criticism during the last 40 years.

At Elateia the considerable increase in burials during the two Submycenaean phases may or may not have required a long span of time, as discussed above. However, the decline-and-depopulation model is not applicable. We have already referred to the community's continuing prosperity during the transitional period. At the same time, from the end of LH IIIC onward a population increase took place, reaching a peak in the first phase of the Submycenaean period, and this may have led to a change in burial customs. In this connection, it may be pointed out that it is not easy to cremate an adult. Therefore, there must have been a group of people at Elateia who were experienced in this burial practice (Dakoronia, Deger-Jalkotzy, and Fabrizii-Reuer 2000–2001, 147–149). The practice of burying corpses in an extremely contracted position, too, may have been associated not only with the increase in burials, but it could also have been a reflection of nonindigenous burial customs. In this connection, it was perhaps no mere chance that the increase in burials and the use of cremation did not extend to all tombs of the Elateia-Alonaki cemetery (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 84). Moreover, new metal adornments and handmade pottery were introduced for burial gifts, and many Mycenaean pottery shapes became obsolete. Therefore, the growth of population and certain cultural changes may be ascribed to the immigration of new population groups.

It is possible that they did not come from afar. At the sanctuary at Kalapodi, where the deposition of handmade jugs and jars had been a long-standing custom, the percentage of handmade pottery rose to 50% during the transition from LH IIIC Late to the Early Protogeometric. This was the same time when handmade jars and jugs were first deposited in the tombs of Elateia. Thus, it may be suggested that the inhabitants of the surrounding mountainous areas, who had previously gathered in the worship of a "goddess of (wild) animals" (Felsch 2001) at the sanctuary at Kalapodi, now moved and settled in the plain. However, the origin of the incised handmade ceramics found at Elateia and of certain metal objects (Dakoronia 2004) has to be sought in more distant regions. Moreover, in view of the abandonment of Mycenaean settlements during and after LH IIIC Late, it cannot be excluded that Mycenaean refugees, too, arrived in the Upper Kephissos valley. Nevertheless, if the increase in burials during the Submycenaean period at Elateia was, indeed, caused by immigrants, these people did not stay for good—or, at least, not all of them stayed. During the EPG period, the number of burials declined, and only a limited number of tombs of the Elateia-Alonaki cemetery were used after the 10th century B.C.

At the present state of study, it is still too soon to make conclusive statements on the social and political organization that may have prevailed at Elateia during the Submycenaean span of time. In view of the general prosperity of the community and the absence of weapons and other distinctive prestige objects, it will certainly require more subtle

criteria to define possible social differentiations. In contrast, the burials of the Early Iron Age clearly testify to elite status of certain individuals and families (Dakoronia, Deger-Jalkotzy, and Fabrizii-Reuer 2009).

The archaeological evidence from Achaea has been recently interpreted by Moschos in terms of political changes and migrations that affected the western regions of Greece during the transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Ages (Moschos 2009). In his view, people from Achaea settled during the Final Mycenaean/Early Submycenaean Phase 6a in neighboring regions such as Elis, Aetolia, and Kephallonia. In Phase 6b, the immigration movement became extensive, leading to the abandonment of many sites. Moschos believes that the ancient myths about migration movements from Achaea to Attica and other regions of eastern Greece and above all to Cyprus may well have contained some kind of a collective historical memory, and that these migrations were organized by a political authority that was probably centralized in the Patras area. During Phase 6b of Achaea, a local EPG style emerged in Aetolia and Acarnania that was apparently a blend of Mycenaean survivals and novel "northern" features (Moschos 2009, 240–253). Population movements were now reversed. Newcomers from the regions across the Corinthian Gulf arrived in the northwest Peloponnese and adjacent islands. Toward the end of Phase 6b, several Mycenaean tombs were reused in Achaea and Kephallonia, while cist graves were introduced in Elis. Doubtless the historical sketch presented by Moschos is fascinating. But is it the only possible interpretation?

In contrast to earlier views, it is now evident that even distant external contacts did not come to a close during the Submycenaean period. However, partners may have changed. For instance, the long-standing relations between central Greece and Achaea seem not to have continued during the mature Submycenaean phase (Deger-Jalkotzy 2009, 98; Moschos 2009, 261). Moreover, in the light of the recent archaeological evidence, it does not seem out of place to resume the old discussion on Greek migrations across the Aegean to Asia Minor and farther on to Cyprus.

In conclusion, research of the last two decades into the LH IIIC period has led us to believe that the "last Mycenaeans" managed to retain their cultural heritage and to adapt it to the conditions that set in after the breakdown of the palatial system. Now the question also has to be asked as to what extent their "successors" were able to preserve and/or transform this heritage and to hand it down to the Early Iron Age.

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